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ABSTRACT

As one of four research projects conducted to increase the amount of study focused on traditional nursery school (group day care centers) and family day care centers, this paper presents and tests two hypotheses: (1) that there would be more verbalizations and more movement in the family day care center, and (2) that there would be less movement and verbalizations in the group day care center. In each environment, five subjects between 28 and 54 months of age were observed for four 10-minute intervals. The two variables measured were time spent by each subject in verbalizations to other children and time spent in movement between activity areas. Results indicated that: (1) a significant trend existed in family day care centers showing that subjects did more moving and verbalizing within activity areas and less moving between areas then the subjects in the group day care center; and (2) there was no significant difference between groups on time spent in movement and verbalization within activity areas. Discussion focused on the need for substantial data before these results are generalized. (SDH)

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Movement versus Time Spent in Verbalizations in Family and Group Day Care Centers

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In a paper (Fiene, 1971) it was pointed out that relatively little research has been done on the "Traditional Nursery School" program (Evans, 1971). In looking at most programs (experimental) such as Bereiter-Engelmann (1969), Karnes (1969), and Palmer (1969) there is a great body of research that goes along with it. However, in "Traditional Nursery School" settings, the program exists but without the great body of research. It was also pointed out that Family Day Care Homes suffer the same malady. When one considers the fact that 85% of the children in the United States (DCCDCA, 1971) are enrolled in the above two centers ("Traditional Nursery Schools" and Family Day Care Homes) one becomes somewhat alarmed.

Besides the fact that 85% of the children in the nation are either in a Traditional Nusery School or a Family Day Care Center, the other reason for investigating these programs is that they are about the closest we can be removed from an uncontrolled, non-laboratory setting. Also the programs do not vary much across the nation (Fiene, 1971). A Traditional Nursery School

EMPHASIZES THE WHOLE CHILD USING ART, MUSIC, COGNITIVE GAMES, DRAMATIC PLAY, FREE PLAY, AND BLOCKS TO HELP DEVELOP THE CHILD. FAMILY DAY CARE SETTINGS ARE BASICALLY CUSTODIAL IN THEIR CARING OF CHILDREN. BOTH TYPES OF PROGRAMS HAVE SIMILIAR EMPHASES IN SUPPLYING THE CHILD WITH AN ENVIRONMENT AS COMFORTABLE AND LIKING AS THE CHILD'S OWN HOME.

IN THIS STUDY, TWO VARIABLES WERE LOOKED AT: (1) THE TIME SPENT VERBALIZING BY Ss TO OTHER CHILDREN IN A GROUP (TRADITIONAL NURSERY SCHOOL) AND FAMILY DAY CARE HOME (CENTER); (2) TIME WAS ALSO TAKEN ON THE MOVEMENT OF EACH CHILD BETWEEN ACTIVITY AREAS. TIME WAS KEPT BY TWO OBSERVERS USING STOP-WATCHES ON ALL THE Ss. THERE HAS BEEN RESEARCH DONE BY THE BRAZELTS' (1970) WHICH INDICATES THAT THERE IS A CAUSAL OR AT LEAST A SLIGHT CORRELATION BETWEEN MOVEMENT AND THE OTHER TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT (LANGUAGE, COGNITION, ETC).

MY HYPOTHESES WERE: (1) THERE WOULD BE MORE VERBALIZATIONS AND MORE MOVEMENT IN THE FAMILY DAY CARE SETTING; (2) THERE WOULD BE LESS MOVEMENT AND LESS VERBALIZATIONS IN THE GROUP DAY CARE SETTINGS.

METHOD

SUBJECTS:

TEN SUBJECTS, FIVE MALES AND FIVE FEMALES BETWEEN THE AGES OF 2[illegible] AND 54 MONTHS. ALL WERE WHITE CHILDREN ATTENDING DAY CARE CENTERS ALL DAY(TRADITIONAL NURSERY SCHOOL CURRICULUM STRESSED). THREE MALES AND TWO FEMALES WERE RANDOMLY SELECTED FROM A FAMILY DAY CARE CENTER. THE SAME WAS DONE IN A GROUP DAY CARE CENTER. THE POPULATION OF THE FAMILY DAY CARE CENTER WAS 10. THE POPULATION OF THE GROUP DAY CARE CENTER WAS 45.

THE GROUP AND FAMILY DAY CARE CENTERS WERE MATCHED FOR A TRADITIONAL NURSERY SETTINGS EMPHASIZING ESSENTIALLY CUSTODIAL CARE OF CHILDREN.

MATERIALS:

EACH OBSERVER HAD TWO STOP WATCHES TO RECORD THE TIME SPENT IN MOVEMENT AND VERBALIZING.

Setting:

The two centers were in the Islip township located in the South-Central portion of Long Island, New York. These were low to middle income areas.

In both centers there were well-defined activity areas. These activity areas were a cognitive games area, a blocks area, an art area, a free play area, and a dramatic play area. Activity areas were delineated on the following criteria: blocks area--an area that contained any type of building toys (erector sets, unit blocks, hollow blocks); art area--contained crayons, coloring blocks, easils, collage materials (felt, paper, scissors); cognitive games--contained puzzles, manipulative small muscle toys; dramatic play area--contained dolls, carriages, dress-up materials; free play area--contained outdoor equipment and large muscle equipment. Activity areas were broken off from each other by waist high (adult height shelves or toy cabinets). In both centers, all activity areas were emphasized equally (i.e. children spent an equal amount of time in all areas).

RECORDINGS:

THE TRAINED OBSERVERS WOULD ONLY START THE STOP-WATCH FOR VERBALIZATIONS (IN THEIR RIGHT HAND) IF THE CHILD WERE ACTUALLY IN A PARTICULAR ACTIVITY AREA ENGAGING IN AN ACTIVITY WHEN VERBALIZING (I.E. CHILD HAD TO BE PLAYING--PICKING UP A TOY, READING A BOOK, DRESSING UP, PUSHING A TOY, ETC.). IF THE CHILD WERE VERBALIZING BUT NOT IN AN ACTIVITY AREA, OR MOVING FROM AREA TO AREA, THE STOP-WATCH FOR VERBALIZATIONS WAS NOT STARTED. THE OBSERVERS WOULD START THE STOP-WATCH FOR MOVEMENT LOCATED IN THEIR LEFT-HAND IF THE CHILD WERE MOVING FROM ACTIVITY AREA TO ACTIVITY AREA.

PROCEDURE:

THE OBSERVERS WHO DID THE RECORDINGS WERE PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS. ONE MALE, ONE FEMALE. TRAINING OF OBSERVERS WAS DONE ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE TO THE ACTUAL COLLECTING OF THE DATA FOR THE STUDY.

THE OBSERVERS WERE LOCATED ON THE PERIPHERY OF THE ROOM, THEY WERE FREE TO MOVE ALONG THE PERIPHERY

OF THE CENTERS IN ORDER TO GET A BETTER VIEW OF THE CHILDREN. THE OBSERVERS SPENT 20 MINUTES IN THE MORNING BETWEEN 10:00-10:30 IN THE CENTERS. THESE TIMES WERE SELECTED FOR THE STAFF INTERACTED WITH THE CHILDREN AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE DURING THIS TIME. THERE WAS NO LARGE GROUP PLAY, THE CHILDREN WERE ENGAGED IN SOLITARY PLAY WITH THEIR PEERS.

THE OBSERVERS WOULD SPEND THEIR 20 MINUTES OF EACH DAY AS FOLLOWS: THEY WOULD ENTER ONE OF THE CENTERS, SYNCHRONIZE THEIR STOP-WATCHES SO THAT EACH OBSERVER STARTED OBSERVING AT PRECISELY THE SAME TIME. ONLY THE TIMINGS WERE KEPT ON EACH OF THE TEN Ss AS THEY VERBALIZED AND MOVED WITHIN THE CENTERS. FORTY MINUTES OF OBSERVATIONS WERE OBTAINED FOR EACH S. THERE WAS A TOTAL OF 400 MINUTES OF OBSERVATIONS FOR ALL THE Ss. THE OBSERVATIONS WERE DONE OVER A TWO WEEK PERIOD. FOUR 10 MINUTE SESSIONS PER SUBJECT.

RELIABILITY WAS CALCULATED FOR THE TWO OBSERVERS FOR EACH 10 MINUTE OBSERVATION SESSION. RELIABILITY WAS CALCULATED BY THE OBSERVERS WHERE IF THEY WERE WITHIN 30 SECONDS OF EACH OTHER FOR THEIR TIMINGS OBTAINED

ON THEIR STOP-WATCHES, THE OBSERVATION WAS CONSIDERED VALID. THIS AVERAGED OUT TO ABOUT .91 AS A RELIABILITY CHECK FOR THE OBSERVERS FOR EACH SESSION.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

THE Ss SHOWED A SIGNIFICANT TREND IN THE FAMILY DAY CARE CENTER TO DO MORE MOVING AND VERBALIZING WITHIN ACTIVITY AREAS AND LESS MOVEMENT BETWEEN AREAS, THAN THE Ss IN THE GROUP DAY CARE CENTER ($t=1.75$, $p < .10$; $t=2.03$, $p < .10$). THERE WAS NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TIME SPENT IN MOVEMENT IN THE ACTIVITY AREAS AND VERBALIZING IN ACTIVITY AREAS IN EITHER THE GROUP OR FAMILY DAY CARE CENTERS. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS LESS MOVEMENT BETWEEN ACTIVITY AREAS IN THE FAMILY DAY CARE CENTER THAN THE GROUP DAY CARE CENTER THIS DID NOT PROVE SIGNIFICANT, HOWEVER A TREND DID EXIST THERE. (SEE FIGURE 1).

INSERT FIGURE 1

FIGURE 1

TOTAL NUMBER OF MINUTES RECORDED BY OBSERVERS OF SS WITHER MOVING OR VERBALIZING IN THE FAMILY AND GROUP DAY CARE CENTERS

	FAMILY DAY CARE CENTERS	GROUP DAY CARE CENTERS	T-TESTS
MOVEMENT BETWEEN ACT. AREAS	196 MINUTES	250 MINUTES	—
MOVEMENT WITHIN ACT. AREAS	350 MINUTES	170 MINUTES	1.76*
VERBALIZ. IN ACT. AR.	498 MINUTES	210 MINUTES	2.10*
T-TESTS	—	—	

* $p < .10$

IN ANALYZING THE DATA IN FIGURE 1, IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE Ss IN THE FAMILY DAY CARE CENTER WERE HIGHLY MOBILE AND FLEXIBLE WITHIN THEIR VARIOUS ACTIVITY AREAS. THESE Ss WERE ALSO VERBALIZING AT A HIGHER LEVEL WITH EACH OTHER IN EACH OF THE ACTIVITY AREAS. THE LEVEL OF DISTRACTION WAS LOW. THIS IS SIGNIFIED BY THE LOW LEVEL OF TIME SPENT IN MOVING FROM ACTIVITY AREA TO ACTIVITY AREA. THE Ss IN THE GROUP DAY CARE CENTER APPEARED TO BE GREATLY DISTRACTED OR AT LEAST MORE DISTRACTED THAN THE Ss IN THE FAMILY DAY CARE CENTER. THIS IS SHOWN BY THE HIGHER LEVEL OF TIME SPENT IN MOVING FROM ACTIVITY AREA TO ACTIVITY AREA.

THIS STUDY SHOWS SOME TRENDS WHICH WERE PRODUCED [redacted] BY THE ABOVE CUSTODIAL DAY CARE ENVIRONMENTS. THE FAMILY DAY CARE CENTER APPEARS TO BE PROVIDING AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH ALLOWS MORE TIME FOR VERBALIZING. THE GROUP DAY CARE CENTER APPEARS NOT TO HAVE AS EFFECTIVE AN ENVIRONMENT FOR PRODUCING VERBALIZATIONS. OF COURSE I AM NOT GENERALIZING THESE STATEMENTS TO THE MULTITUDE OF CENTERS THAT EXIST BEFORE SUBSTANTIAL DATA CAN BE OBTAINED.

A QUESTION WHICH STILL HAS TO BE ANSWERED CONCERNS THE QUALITY OF CARE PROVIDED BY FAMILY AND GROUP DAY CARE CENTERS. THIS HAS TO BE ANSWERED MORE FULLY USING APPROPRIATE CRITERIA. IF ONE USES THE NUMBER OF DISTRACTIONS OR THE AMOUNT OF VERBALIZING WITH THE LESS DISTRACTIONS, THAN WHICH ENVIRONMENT WILL PROVIDE THE QUALITY OF CARE?

THIS QUESTION OF VERBALIZATIONS HAS TO BE ANALYZED MORE FULLY IN LOOKING AT THE NATURE OF THESE VERBALIZATIONS. DISTRACTIONS CAN BE GOOD OR BAD DEPENDING ON THEIR TIMING. HOWEVER, THE AMOUNT OF VERBALIZING WOULD APPEAR TO BE POSITIVELY CORRELATED WITH INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT. THE MORE VERBAL A CHILD, THE MORE INTELLIGENT, THE MORE HE/SHE COMMUNICATES TO HIS/HER PEERS (GORDON, 1972).

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